

Draft Guidelines for Public Communications outside SBE meetings

In public communications outside Board meetings, such as with the media, legislators, and interest groups, Board members must balance their personal rights of free speech with their roles as members of the Board.

Board members' authority exists only in duly-warned meetings of the Board or its committees. Members may not seek to influence or change the outcomes of Board decisions except in such meetings.

In all Board matters, only the Chair (or designee) is authorized to speak publicly for the Board.

Other members of the Board may publicly express their views on Board matters so long as they do so in a manner consistent with the norms of Board meetings and so long as they clarify explicitly that they speak only for themselves as individual Board members.

State Board of Education – Norms

Norms of the State Board of Education

- attentive listening
- listening to understand
- don't interrupt before the person speaking is finished talking
- be prepared
- training for new committee members
- assume best intentions
- trust other board members' expertise
- go digital
- meet more
- sharpen up agenda so it is more efficient

Pre-meeting Norms

- receiving the agenda and packet at least one week in advance
- know the point of contact
- policy items to be discussed one month and voted on the next month (on the agenda for 2 months)
- allow postponing for further discussion and reading

Meeting Norms

- cutting off debate should be used with great restraint
- stay on point
- assume that more information may be needed
- be respectful, remain open to new perspectives
- go beyond the what to why and elaborate on assumptions
- advocate but value the diversity of opinions
- share the air so everyone gets heard